

In looking forward to next week, to the budget resolution, this is a time where we have an opportunity to look at what the Nation is going to do financially for the coming year. I think it is important we all prepare for this debate. There is a limited amount of time we can debate this issue. There is no limitation on the number of amendments that can be offered. We certainly hope there is not an unlimited number of amendments, but that people will give thought and consideration to the ones that are most important.

The Democrats today are going to take some time to talk about a number of issues, and leading the debate will be the chairman of the Democratic Policy Committee, Senator BYRON DORGAN. When he is called upon, he is going to talk about a number of issues.

The Senator from North Dakota has certainly been a leader on the issue of the Federal Reserve System, and there is no one who has been more articulate when talking about the need to do something about the Federal Reserve System and its secretive nature, and the fact that, as an example, they have a \$3.5 billion slush fund that is there to be used for many other programs in the Federal Government.

There is no need to have the Federal Reserve with this amount of money, this pot of money, this \$3.5 billion that they simply have never used since its inception. This money can be used for education. It can be used for many of the other programs for which we are searching for money. I hope during today we will have a good discussion on issues that are affecting this country and that tomorrow we move forward on the social security earnings legislation.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 5 minutes each.

Under the previous order, the time until 2 p.m. shall be under the control of the Senator from Illinois, Mr. DURBIN, or his designee.

The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, it is my intention to seek recognition for the purpose of making a presentation. My understanding is Senator BYRD has a presentation. I will defer my presentation so that the distinguished Senator from West Virginia can proceed. I ask unanimous consent that I be recognized following the presentation of the Senator from West Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I thank my friend, the very distinguished junior Senator from North Dakota, but he is the dean of the delegation. He served in the House several years.

#### DREAM OF SPRING

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, today, as we observe the arrival of the vernal equinox and, with it, the official arrival of spring, the words of the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge come easily to mind:

All Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair—  
The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—

And Winter slumbering in the open air,  
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!

Washington has turned her smiling face towards spring as well. The roadsides, so recently painted gray-brown with grit and dirt in the wake of receding glaciers of snow mounded up by mastodon plow trucks, have greened again. The brave crocuses have forced their way through the still-cold Earth to offer their first bright promise of warmer weather, the merry forsythia mirrors the Sun's golden light, and the pear and magnolia trees are softening the gray weave of bare branches with their pink and white petals. Washington's famous cherry blossoms will soon be adding their dainty petals to the spring breezes.

It is time for the soft whisper of falling snow to be replaced by the conversational patter of spring rains. It is time for the volume to be turned up from the quiet solos of solitary winter birds to the rousing, full-throated chorus of springtime birdsongs.

I asked the robin, as he sprang  
From branch to branch and sweetly sang,  
What made his breast so round and red;  
Twas "looking at the sun," he said;

I asked the violets, sweet and blue,  
Sparkling in the morning dew,  
Whence came their colors, then so shy;  
They answered, "looking to the sky";

I saw the roses, one by one,  
Unfold their petals to the sun,  
I asked them what made their tints so bright,  
And they answered, "looking to the light";

I asked the thrush, whose silvery note  
Came like a song from angel's throat,  
Why he sang in the twilight dim;  
He answered, "looking up at Him."

We have this full-throated chorus of springtime voices—the violets, the roses, the robin, the thrush, the other bird songs—and it is time to spade up the garden, releasing the intoxicating perfume of rich, moist earth. How my little dog, Billy, loves that scent. He stands watch over the spade as I prepare the ground for my tomatoes, and his ears are pricked up, his tail is wagging, his eyes are shining with anticipation, waiting to chip in with paws flying, heedless of the dirt he will track into the house on his white coat. You see, he is a Maltese. This is Billy

Byrd—Billy Byrd II. I used to have another dog. It was a cocker spaniel, but it was Billy Byrd I.

It is also time to marvel at the mysteries of God's designs as we watch daffodils burn their way through dense layers of last year's leathery leaves in order to put on their bright show. It is time to wonder how a tiny crocus bulb, no larger than a thumbnail and no heavier than a dust-dry clod of earth, can push aside frozen Earth, melt its way through snow or ice, just to put out four colorful petals. I sometimes wonder for whom the crocuses' show is, for surely crocuses bloom too early for even the hardiest bee.

William Shakespeare observed that, "There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners . . . They hold up Adam's profession." There is indeed a kinship among gardeners, whether serious gardeners whose gardens are their lifelong avocation, or the duffer with a few beds who buys plants at the local hardware store each spring. All gardeners are, at heart, optimists. They have to be. This season allows the gardener each year to fall in love all over again, and to wear on his smiling face a dream of spring and of greatness in the garden. He stands outside, shovel in not-yet-blistered hand, and has visions. He sees, not the patchy lawn and unkempt flowerbeds worn by winter, but some grand turf flowing like a green sea between islands of color, Sun, and shade. He foresees the abundance of the garden overflowing from his table to those of his friends and family. In March, it is not possible to truly believe that there will ever be too many tomatoes, too many zucchini, too many cucumbers. Each seed in the brightly colored envelope, each small budding plant, is precious and deserving of an opportunity to grow. Each is a gamble, but a gamble in which the gardener believes the odds are on his side. And why not? God is also on his side. Not all the plants will make it, but enough will, and those survivors will often exceed his most fecund imaginings.

West Virginia is full of master gardeners. Their pantries and cellars are treasure houses filled with jewel-tone quart jars of ruby tomatoes, emerald green beans, and sapphire blueberries. Crystal quilted jelly jars hold not precious unguents, but the ambrosia of the gods—homemade jams, jellies, and preserves distilled from the freshest strawberries, plums, cherries, quinces, apples, and blackberries. West Virginia's home canners are well prepared to cope with the bounteous overflow of the overambitious gardener.

To be a gardener is not only to be optimistic, but also to be patient. If something does not work out this year, there is always a different scheme next year. Over time, even the most scraggly sapling will reach majestic maturity, towering over the landscape and altering the microclimate of the yard

with its shade and its earthmoving roots. The sun-loving flowers near it will gradually be replaced by those which tolerate increasing amounts of shade. No garden is a static place—how could it be?—filled with so much polite but fierce competition among its denizens, and always under attack by invading insects and dreaded diseases—black spot, to be sure, rather than the Black Plague, but dreaded, nonetheless.

To be a gardener is to be close to the Creator, to follow in His example. You see, God made the country; man made the town. To be, as Shakespeare said, holding up Adam's profession, that is what it is to be a gardener. We each try to create, at least in our dreams, our own small Eden. We learn the great lessons of life as we cultivate patience and nurture our optimism. In a garden one sees, up close—up close, up real close—the great mysteries of birth, life, struggle, death, yes, and renewal, writ small enough to comprehend and only then, to translate into some larger understanding that may, with age, approach wisdom. My chaplain will say, in a garden, God speaks to us simply, in the language of flowers.

The kiss of the sun for pardon,  
The song of the birds for mirth,  
One is nearer God's Heart in the garden  
Than anywhere else on earth.

So said Dorothy Frances Gurney, and surely her words are even more true in the spring garden than at any other time of year. It gives me joy to watch the greening of the earth, once again, and to witness the triumph of each little bulb and each little bud as it bursts forth, victorious over the chill of winter. I am filled with warmth that is easy to share, as I and my colleagues in Adam's profession emerge from our winter hibernation into the soft spring air and, with smiling faces, dream of spring.

The year's at the spring  
And day's at the morn;  
Morning's at seven;  
The hillside's dew-pearled;  
The lark's on the wing;  
The snail's on the thorn;  
God's in His Heaven—  
All is right with the world.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, let me thank the Senator from West Virginia. In many ways, you have never really heard spring described until you have heard it described by the distinguished Senator from West Virginia. It also fits with something I come to the floor to talk about.

#### FAMILY FARMERS

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, we have over 2,000 family farmers who have arrived in Washington, DC, this morning. In other times and other circumstances, they would be preparing for spring planting.

Spring is a time for farmers to begin thinking about getting to the field to plant their seeds and do the work family farmers do. But instead of preparing for spring planting, 2,000 family farmers are here in Washington, DC, today.

I intend to leave this Chamber and have lunch with them. They are holding a "farmer's share lunch", just steps from the Capitol on the lawn in the upper Senate park beside the Russell Building. A customer buying this same lunch at a restaurant or in some other venue in Washington, DC would pay \$10. These farmers are charging the portion of the food dollar they get: From a \$10 lunch, they get approximately 39 cents. So over in the park, farmers will be providing lunch for 39 cents to demonstrate how little of America's food dollar family farmers are getting.

We have such a serious problem on America's family farms. Two thousand of those family farmers have come to Washington, DC, to say to the Federal Government that the public policy dealing with family farmers simply isn't working. If it is in the interests of our country to preserve a network of family farms to produce America's food—if those are our policy interests in America—then we must change public policy because the current farm program does not work.

There is a fellow in North Dakota named Dave Smith. He is a farmer in Makoti, ND. Frankly, I have never met Dave Smith. He calls himself the Flying Farmer. He has developed a hobby of jumping over stock cars. He builds a ramp, jumps these cars, and dives over to the other side. He wears a helmet and performs at the county fairs and the State fairs.

I have seen him do these tricks a couple of times and have always wondered what would persuade someone to do these things?

Let me tell you how he got in the "Guinness Book of World Records". Dave Smith, the Flying Farmer, from Makoti, ND, set a world record by driving in reverse for 500 miles at an average speed of 34 miles per hour.

I am thinking to myself: Why would someone want to do that? But then I recognized that it reminds me of public policy as it affects family farmers, an endurance race in the wrong direction.

The question is, What do we do to stop this movement in the wrong direction and start it in the right direction? What do we do for family farmers?

I have on previous occasions talked in the Senate about what one finds when going to Europe. Go to the European countryside, visit with their farmers and go to the small towns that rely on families who live off the land. Get a feeling for how things are going in rural Europe.

Farmers are doing well in Europe. Small towns are doing fine in Europe. There is life; one can feel it. One can

sense it. Why? Because Europe has decided that as a matter of public policy, the kind of economy they want is an economy that has food production based on the family unit. They want to maintain and retain family farmers in their future. It is a deliberate public policy in Europe. They have been hungry, and they don't intend to go hungry again. They want broad-based ownership of food production in Europe.

I found it interesting that the European trade representatives, who are often vilified—and perhaps I do it from time to time—talked about trade in agriculture in the context of families and communities when I met with them at the WTO meeting in Seattle. "Multifunctionality" is the term they used. They talked about the impact on family farmers and the relationship to building communities as a result of a network of farms in the countryside.

Our trade negotiators look at trade through the pristine view of one word—markets, as though it doesn't have anything to do with families or communities. As if somehow there is no relationship between virtue and math when it comes to the question of profits and losses. I want to talk for a couple of minutes about the fallacy of all of that.

These days, when there is so much economic prosperity in so much of our country, and we are blessed with so many things, we find that in the granaries, garages and in the machine sheds of America's family farms, families are gathering trying to figure out: How do we get this equipment ready for the field work in the spring to plant a crop? Will our banker lend us the money to buy seeds and fuel and fertilizer, for example, to once again try to make a living on the family farm? Or are we now going to lose our dream? Will we, after 30 years of trying, lose the opportunity to continue farming this year because prices have collapsed and our trade agreements have not been good for agriculture?

Interest rates are going up. So many other things are confronting the farmer over which they have no control.

I will show a few charts that describe what is happening to America's family farms. The families who have come to town, the 2,000 of them, to say there is something wrong that needs to be fixed, here is what they are confronted with. Look what has happened to the farmer's share of the retail beef dollar. It has dropped precipitously.

This chart shows the farmer's share of the retail pork dollar—it is almost interchangeable—a dramatic collapse in 19 years. For North Dakota, where we raise a great deal of grain, this chart shows the farmer's share of the cereal grains dollar. Some might say, well, we are importing a lot of food; consumers are able to access cheaper food. Have you been to the grocery store lately and taken a look at the bar